

(3) 11. (New) The polarization-maintaining optical fiber component according to claim 6, wherein said polarization-maintaining optical filter has a birefringent index of 5×10^{-5} to 5×10^{-4} .

(4) 12. (New) The polarization-maintaining optical fiber component according to claim 6, wherein crosstalk of said polarization-maintaining optical filter is equal to or greater than - 20 db/km.

(5) 13. (New) The polarization-maintaining optical fiber component according to claim 6, wherein loss of said polarization-maintaining optical filter is equal to or greater than 1 db/km. ✱

CONDITIONAL PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME

If any extension of time for this response is required, applicant requests that this be considered a petition therefore. Please charge the required Petition fee to Deposit Account No. 03-1240.

ADDITIONAL FEE

Please charge any insufficiency of fees, or credit any excess to our Deposit Account No. 03-1240.

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended herein, is respectfully requested. Claims 1 through 5 and 9 are canceled. Claim 6 is amended and new claims 10-13 are added pursuant to this amendment.

The applicant hereby amends claim 6 to include all features of the original claims 1, 6 and 9. With respect to the amended claim 6, the applicant respectfully points out that it is not disclosed by the U.S. Patent No. 6,463,195, which does not teach using a polarization beam splitter or a polarization beam combiner as a the polarization-maintaining optical fiber component. Thus, since this feature is not described in the cited reference, the applicant respectfully points out that the present invention, as presented in the amended claims, is patentably distinct from the citation.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version, captioned "**Version With Markings To Show Changes Made**", showing changes made to the claims and specification by the current amendment. Applicant respectfully requests entry of this Amendment and an early favorable action on the merits.

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail under 37 C.F.R. 1.8 in an envelope addressed to:

Assistant Commissioner for Patents, United States Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, D.C. 20231.

DATE: February 6, 2003

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Respectfully submitted,

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-- 6. (Amended) A polarization-maintaining optical fiber component produced by the steps of:

laying two or more polarization-maintaining optical fibers [recited in claim 1] side by side; and

heating lengthwise portions of said polarization-maintaining optical fibers, fusing [said] these heated portions, and elongating said heated portions in a lengthwise direction to thereby form an optical coupling section;

wherein said polarization-maintaining optical fiber having stress applying sections arranged symmetrically to each other with respect to a core in a cladding surrounding said core, and a largest one of a plurality of circles concentrically provided with said core or said cladding, which do not reach said stress applying sections and do not include said stress applying sections within a diameter of 20 um or greater; and said polarization-maintaining optical fiber component is a polarization beam splitter or a polarization beam combiner. --

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